

in Turner's career not directly related to Missouri—his diplomatic career and his involvement with freed blacks of the Cherokee Nation. The balance in this biography is one of its strengths, as we learn as much about a black diplomat in Africa as we do about a black politician in Missouri.

This is a well-researched and readable work with superb use of manuscript collections from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Freedmen's Bureau, and the Department of State. This volume is less a complete study of black Missouri politics after the Civil War and more an insightful portrayal of the public life of an African-American politician who ventured far from the domestic concerns of his people.

Knights of the Plow: Oliver H. Kelley and the Origins of the Grange in Republican Ideology, by Thomas A. Woods. Henry A. Wallace Series on Agricultural History and Rural Studies. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991. xxii, 254 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$26.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY STANLEY PARSONS, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

During the past twenty years historians have relentlessly refined the interpretations presented in the classic history of the Grange, Solon Buck's 1913 work, *The Granger Movement*. Buck presented the Grangers as somewhat confused reformers who aimed to attack the farmers' enemies—railroads and the "monopolies"—but who could never quite decide on the right method of attack. Buck pictured the Grange as a rather conservative, partly educational, partly social, partly cooperative organization, which only reluctantly engaged in politics and reforms aimed to change the economic system they believed oppressed them. This reluctance to try to change the basic socioeconomic system causes many younger historians to label Grangers as conservative. In *Knights of the Plow: Oliver H. Kelley and the Origins of the Grange in Republican Ideology*, Thomas A. Woods adds several new dimensions to the debate concerning the Grange and reform movements in general.

The most important contribution of Woods's study is in the chapters dealing explicitly with Kelley's role in the Grange. In fact, Woods gets about as close to writing a full-fledged biography of the founder of the Grange as we shall ever see. Kelley did not leave a lot behind, and it is to the great credit of Woods, the former site manager of Kelley's old farm at Elk River, Minnesota, that he was able to uncover enough material to make a convincing case for Kelley's almost single-handed creation of the Patrons of Husbandry. At the core of this

new material is Woods's treatment of Kelley's early career as both a farmer and townsite promoter in central Minnesota. Kelley, like many late nineteenth-century midwesterners, loved promotion—promotion of almost anything. During his early farming career he became an ardent propagandizer for new farming techniques, an interest that led him to organize and promote a county agricultural society. At that time such societies were primarily interested in educating farmers in the most recent farming techniques. It was this experience that foreshadowed the Grange's emphasis on education. Even more important for Wood, Kelley's experiences at this time also impressed upon him the need to attack the major cause of the farmers' troubles, the railroads and "monopoly capitalism." This was the radical Kelley, and the Kelley in whom Woods seems most interested.

In addition to the new biographical detail, a major concern in *Knights of the Plow* is establishing the source of Kelley's radicalism. While some historians of agricultural protest movements believe late nineteenth-century farmers created new and radical explanations for farm hardships, Woods sees farm radicalism as a latter-day manifestation of the republican egalitarianism of the nation's founders. This is a tolerable idea and probably contains a great deal of truth, but it is difficult to document in a really convincing manner, and the author grasps at any remotely suggestive comment by Kelley to make his point. Certainly the founders are the chief fount of our egalitarian ideals, but these ideals have been enlarged and reinforced from many other sources.

Knights of the Plow touches most of the issues of Granger historiography. For example, the time for the genesis of the idea for the movement is presented as coming from Kelley's unsuccessful experiences on his Minnesota farm rather than from his trip through the South in the summer of 1867. But as in all historical works, the author raises some interesting questions he fails to answer. One of these is the character of Kelley himself. An inveterate promoter, his early career was spent in townsite promotion; then came ten frenzied years as an agricultural radical; and then the balance of life again spent in townsite promotion. Woods refrains from attempting to psychoanalyze this behavior. He also gives us very little analysis of Kelley's strange relationship with the other national officers of the Grange. These men are presented as powerless nonentities—until they expel Kelley from the order. There must have been more to the story. The reason for these minor complaints, however, probably rests with the absence of sources rather than the industry of the author. From somewhat limited sources Woods has produced a study of sound scholar-

ship and theoretical sophistication. It stands as an indispensable work in the history of the Grange.

Women of the Grange: Mutuality and Sisterhood in Rural America, 1866-1920, by Donald B. Marti. Contributions in Women's Studies, No. 124. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991. viii, 157 pp. Notes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DOROTHY SCHWIEDER, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

With the present interest in American rural women, it seems essential for someone to focus on women in the Grange. Founded in 1867, the Grange, or the Patrons of Husbandry, provided one of the few rural organizations open to both farm men and women. Using primarily institutional records such as minutes and proceedings of Grange meetings and histories of both local and state Granges, Donald Marti gives an insightful view of the interests, activities, and contributions of Grange women primarily from the 1860s through the 1920s. Limited material is also included on Grange women through the 1950s and 1960s. Marti's emphasis reflects the Grange's greater strength in the Northeast than in the Middle West. Throughout, he highlights individual women and their accomplishments.

Marti's subtitle includes the words *mutuality* and *sisterhood*; in effect, these two words provide the framework for his study. The sisters, as he refers to female Grange members, continually worked to share mutual interests and projects with their Grange brothers. But at the same time, the sisters cooperated with each other in promoting issues such as woman suffrage and home economics. Marti describes the typical Grange woman as an Anglo-Protestant who possessed a good education (often a high school graduate), had taught school before marriage, and belonged to a higher income group than did most farm families.

Within the Grange, women's activities were first viewed as ceremonial, but officials soon organized women's committees that provided females with specific responsibilities. Women also began to share general offices, such as lecturer, with male members. The latter responsibility meant women traveled widely to speak before different Grange locals. Gradually women came to fill a greater number of positions, some even serving as Master, the top position within each Grange organization. Grange women also did a great deal of writing for Grange publications, including poetry, essays, and general articles.

While Grange men and women shared economic goals to improve farm life, Grange women were always most interested in top-

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